

To: Stalcup, Dana[Stalcup.Dana@epa.gov]
From: Hawkins, CherylA
Sent: Tue 9/1/2015 8:26:37 PM
Subject: FW: Press Inquiry: Sierra Magazine (Schuknecht #240)

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From: Selia, Emily **On Behalf Of** EOC Public Information
Sent: Tuesday, September 01, 2015 4:23 PM
To: Keller, Melanie; Wells, Suzanne; Hawkins, CherylA; EOC Solid Waste; Dreyfus, Melissa G.; EOC Technical Specialist; Mahmud, Shahid
Subject: Press Inquiry: Sierra Magazine (Schuknecht #240)

Hello team,

I'm trying to answer the following question and am wondering if it needs to go to R8 or if OSWER would answer. A draft answer from my research (using language from the web and previous responses) is below. Can we add a more direct answer about if we were doing "clean up" at Red and Bonita or some other related task?

Question: Was the crew in the process of cleaning up the abandoned Red and Bonita Mine near Silverton, Colorado when the breach occurred?

DRAFT:

Details on the Gold King Mine incident are available on our website at <http://www2.epa.gov/goldkingmine>. As stated online, on August 5, 2015, EPA was conducting an investigation of the Gold King Mine near Silverton, Colorado, to:

- assess the on-going water releases from the mine,
- treat mine water, and
- assess the feasibility of further mine remediation.

While excavating above the old adit (a mine tunnel), pressurized water began leaking above the mine tunnel, spilling about three million gallons of water stored behind the collapsed material into Cement Creek, a tributary of the Animas River.

The removal assessment at the Gold King Mine had been planned in conjunction with a plan to install a bulkhead (plug) at the nearby Red and Bonita Mine. We have assessed the Red and Bonita mine and to our knowledge, it is not hydraulically connected to the Gold King Mine. EPA is conducting ongoing investigations at several mines, including the nearby Red and Bonita mine, to determine the nature and extent of the contamination in the Upper Animas Mining District Site, including discharging mine adits.

